by hand in all the better grades. The coloring covers nearly all the gold; bits of it and the sabi are put on afterwards.

The difference between Japanese and French leather-paper is, that in France it is made in sheets of common paper, no lacquer being used, and the design put on by polychromatic printing. It is then embossed by machinery and varnished afterward.

In Japan it is all made by hand and embossed first, then colored. The use of lacquer makes it almost indestructible and able to defy all changes of temperature.

The Japanese paper is cheaper than the French by reason of the low price paid for labor in the Island Empire, besides the rolls are wider and longer. Owing to European influence the price of all kinds of labor is daily advancing, even though the wage-earners accomplish only about one-third the work in day that laborers do at home.

DECORATING FRESHLY FINISHED WALLS.

By A. Ashmun Kelly.

IT is the practice where the best results are sought, such as permanency of ownership, or occupation of the house indicates, to allow the usual plastered walls to remain a year or so without decorations of any kind, to allow them to dry out thoroughly and to give them opportunity to do all the cracking they may need to do in the event of settling of the building. A good job of plastering will crack very little if any from drying out, while a properly constructed house, on a gobd foundation, will do little if any settling. But good plaster work is a rarity. Rare indeed even in high-priced houses. Years ago a "hard finish" was put on even the walls of cheap houses. Good plaster was used. Water was frequently applied and the surface was rubbed with the trowel vigorously and long, the result being a flint-like, glazed surface that was calculated to cheer the decorator's heart. To day too much lime and too little water and rubbing are used. The result is seen in porous, lustreless, rotten walls, unfit for anything, even whitewash.

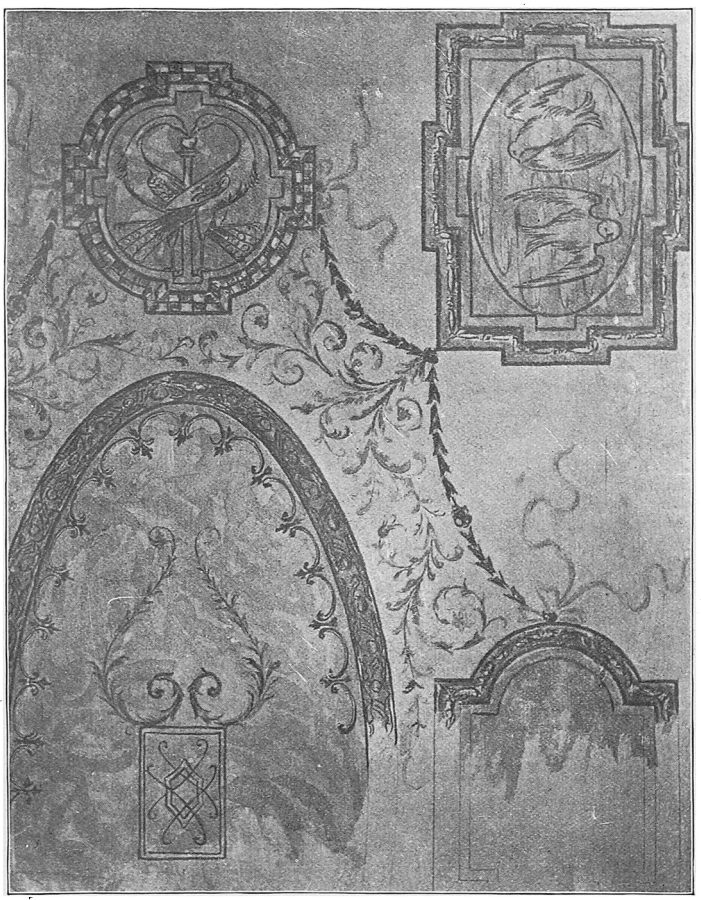
Our grandmothers used to wash the walls once or twice a year with soap or soda and water. Hence these hard-surfaced walls were known as "wash-walls." They, like the dodo, are now extinct.

Bad walls are the decorator's bane to-day. They are bad even when allowed time to dry out. Fresh, they are worse.

What shall be done with them? The decorator does not like to wait a whole year, nor the occupant of the house either, before decorating those damp walls. If the work is done before they are dry, trouble is bound to ensue.

The "operation" houses, built in blocks, are papered, gorgeously, soon as the painter finishes. I went to see one, contemplating its rental. While speaking to the owner I noticed a corner of the handsome ceiling decoration slightly loose, and called his attention to it. He took hold of it, and down came decoration, white plaster and all! When paper is applied to undried plaster it is apt to pull the white coat off in drying.

Great improvement has been made in recent years in plaster for walls. There are several hard-drying wall plasters now on the market, similar to each other perhaps, and while they cost a trifle more than ordinary lime plaster, they are decidedly cheaper in the end. For instance, here are some qualities claimed by its makers for one certain wall plaster: A non-conductor; non-absorbent; washable; best surface for paint, paper, fresco (?); hard, yet not metallic; not chip, crack, crack or break under carpenter's working; useful for repairing or patching; easily spread; sets rapidly; can be put equally well on any kind of surface; when finished does not look mottled or show stains; can be tinted any color.



Part of an Ornamental Ceiling (Special Work). Designed by Aldam Heaton.

This looks like an ideal plaster. But what shall we do with the ordinary plaster wall, not dry? Common sense answers, let them dry! But we cannot do this. At least we don't want to, which amounts to the same thing. Well, you assume consequences, and we will prescribe.

A wash of best hydraulic cement will answer, if its rather rough surface be no objection. Better still, I think, is a gypsum preparation, of which the market offers several. And of this "plastic" preparation much might be said to interest decorators, particularly amateurs.

A coat or two of such preparation would give a dry surface to decorate upon, while, being porous itself, and favorable to union with the undry plaster under it, the latter has a fair chance to continue drying, and without detriment to its superincumbent coats.

A size of shellac varnish would be useful on a fresh wall. Ordinary liquid wood filler is often used for this purpose. A coat of boiled oil is preferred by many painters for a size. But these oily surfaced sizes are hardly adapted for wall-paper, unless cut on surface with sandpaper. For water colors a varnished or painted wall is always an ideal wall, because of the absence of suction. It is also desirable if its glossy surface be first "cut" with sandpaper, as already stated, or with soda

water (not the beverage decorators usually drink, but salsoda in solution.)

In summer new walls dry out quite rapidly, so that, if they have been finished by early summer, there should be no trouble from decorating them by the time the painters are out of the way. Much, of course, will depend upon the character of the plaster. The hard, specially prepared plasters ought by all means be used. These are extremely hard, fine grained and dry out quickly. In winter time let the rooms be constantly heated during the plastering of the walls, and on up to the time the walls are finished. This will ensure a condition that will render decorating safe enough.

To decorate a damp wall by imprisoning the dampness is risky. Either see that they are reasonably dry, or advise the owner of the risk he assumes. It will pay you.

THE EFFECTS OF LIGHT ON INTERIOR DECORATIONS.

By A. Ashmun Kelly.

NATURAL LIGHT, entering directly or by reflection, should always be considered a very important factor in the coloring and furnishing of an apartment, and its probable effect should always be forseen by the decorator before putting a hand to the work. Otherwise failure is very apt to reward his want of thought.

It is not sufficient that we adopt blue for a warm exposure, and yellow for a cold, because the former may be dark and the latter full of light, and hence conditions will become somewhat reversed. The office of color, in this respect, is to enliven or depress natural conditions, and by it we may fill the cool room full of warmth, or the warm room full of refreshing coolness. Likewise we may counterbalance an excess of light by subdued, retiring colors, while a deficiency may be compensated for by warm, mellow, advancing colors. We can cause a cold, dark room to glow with the fervor of an Oriental day, or a hot, glaring room to fill the mind with suggestions of cooling fountains and shadowy dells. There is at this very time a good illustration of this fact at Wanamaker's, where a square, room-like booth has been arranged on a dark upper floor and filled with gold and enamel furniture and other goods. It is called the "gold room," and the name is a fitting one, not solely because of the gilding that abounds, but rather because the electric lights, covered with a dull yellow stuff, shed a glow of auriferous splendor over all the room, and coming out of the outer darkness and chill into this golden room is like emerging from an Arctic into a Tropic scene. Remove the yellow, golden glare and all becomes dark and cold. Adjoining is a "black and white" room, pieces of alabaster statuary being thrown into contrast with black lace goods and furnishings, while the clear, dead-white globules fill the apartment with the coldest of light. Coming from the gold to the black and white room one involuntarily shudders, as if with a chill.

There are rooms entirely too bright for comfort. These should be toned down with color and fabrics. It will not be necessary to shut out the light, except perhaps in part, as the desired effect may be had by proper color treatment. As dark colors absorb light, so hues, shades, and tints of such colors tend materially to modify excessive light, and these are to be indicated in such cases. Then there are other means available for the purpose, such as the furniture stuffs and the hangings. If these be of light-absorbing nature they will assist in counterbalancing excessive light. Whatever, in fact, absorbs light is useful in this relation. Lustreless and giltless papers also are useful. Mirrors may be hung so as to catch and dispose rays of light in a darkish room. Varnished objects, glass and enamel ware, bright colors, these all help in the diffusion of the light's rays, and so the otherwise dark room is made bright and cheerful.

As a general thing, light rarely enters a room directly. It oftener enters by reflection and refraction. Where it meets with the least number of obstacles outside the window it comes in full and strong. Otherwise it climbs from one point to another and thus finds its tollsome way in. In building houses provision should be made for giving every room abundant light. It is much easier to modify than to increase light, besides which abundant light is essential to health and happiness, and it is so cheap that no one should be denied it, not even a criminal. As to artificial light, there is no end to the artifices we can resort to to make our rooms what we want them as to light and shade. The direction, quantity and even color of such lights can be had under our control, and we can also have side and center light, or both when desirable. We can have them high or low, and by globes, shades, reflectors or screens, we can control their direction. The globes can be colored to achieve any effect complementary to the existing scheme of decoration.

Ceiling Paper, after a Design in the Ducal Palace, Venice.

But it is in the matter of daylight that we find our chief difficulty. Here we cannot supply actual light, and must resort to its simulation, in colors. Yellow is the strongest of all the colors, and the most diffusive of light. Hence, the room that is deficient in light must be treated in this key. The tendency must be in the direction of yellow. Pale cream ceiling, with buffish ornamentation and white and gold; walls of a fuller and richer cream, approaching golden yellow, with bits of clear yellow, gold and light blue ornamentation, and warm red in generous measure; woodwork old ivory, in polished enamel; carpet creamy and full of bright bits of yellow, red, blue and golden buff; drapery old gold, blue and pale straw; upholstery ivory and light blue.

This scheme gives abundant light—reflecting colors, and at the same time no dearth of more solid and quite positive, even cool, colors. For we do not want a "symphony in yellow." At least, I do not, for I should tire of it quite soon. The room that has too much light requires an opposite treatment. The colors must be light absorbent. For this purpose let us employ for the ceiling a light green having a bluish cast, with bluish gray and reddish gold ornamentation; walls deep sea green, with pale green, gray and silver ornamentation; woodwork a pale sea green; carpet greens, grays, black and silver; drapery greenish gray; upholstery ecru, greenish gray and silver.

The tone is green, a cool, light-tempering harmony of colors that does not chill or shut out all light, nor does it fail to effect its purpose. These, of course, are suggestive. Fortunately there are a number of schemes available, and it will only need